

A.C. Monza take first leg lead

WYCOMBE Wanderers have every reason to feel pleased about their first venture into European football. Although they went down 1-0 to A.C. Monza in the first leg of the Anglo-Italian Trophy on Wednesday, they gave an excellent performance and thoroughly enjoyed their three-day visit.

The Italians certainly gave the players and officials a royal welcome. Met at Milan Airport on Tuesday evening, they stayed at a first-class hotel and received various gifts from both the club and the town of Monza. The Mayor presented Wanderers treasurer Roger Lee with an emblem of the town on a marble stand while the officials received a silver tray from the Monza club with smaller trays for themselves.

All the players received small mementos while the Monza supporters presented skipper John Delaney with a silver plaque. Wanderers will reciprocate in the return match at Loakes Park on October 8.

The match itself was of the highest standard. Monza were the equivalent to one of our

Division 2 or 3 clubs and an excited 4,000 fans gathered for the game. There was quite a surprise for the Blues when they walked out to a tremendous reception at 8.30 in the evening. Several rockets were fired into the air and hundreds of horns — the trademark of European spectators — sounded off.

The Italian fans soon had a glimpse of Wycombe's power in the first 30 seconds. Geoff Anthony rounded the full-back almost straight from the kick-off and crossed to Dylan Evans. He controlled well and sent in a shot on the turn which whistled past the post with the home defence caught cold.

Monza were quick to retaliate, the essence of their game was support and teamwork. They attacked at speed with short, accurate passing and both full backs overlapping regularly. Wycombe's defence managed to

hold them until the 26th minute when Monza forced a corner. The ball was cleared but from the resulting cross Ugo Tossetto headed powerfully past John Maskell.

A goal up and with their fans in full voice, Monza piled on further pressure but Wycombe defended bravely. Maskell saved well on a number of occasions while Terry Reardon, Wycombe's man of the match, did his best to set up more Wanderers' attacks. Too often, however, the forwards were unable to penetrate inside the box.

The Blues had several problems with their offside trap. Both linesmen were slow to spot Milan's forwards when they were in an offside position and this meant the defence was not able to mark as tightly as usual. The Italians made the most of this with lightning quick attacks which often troubled the visitors.

If the first half had belonged to the Italians, the second was Wycombe's. They attacked regularly and Howard Kennedy crashed in one drive which the 'keeper did well to save. Mick Hollifield also went close and Tony Horseman just failed to reach one cross from Paul Birdseye, who with Ray Eaton, often joined in the attacks.

In the last quarter Monza hit back strongly in search of more goals to bring to Loakes Park. Once again, however, the Blues defence resisted all their attempts to keep the score down to 1-0.

Considering the alien conditions, with temperatures up in the 70s, Wycombe were well satisfied with their performance and feel they have a good chance to lift the £3,000 trophy when the return is staged next week.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell; P. Birdseye, K. Mead, J. Delaney, R. Eaton; M. Hollifield, T. Reardon, H. Kennedy; A. Horseman; D. Evans, G. Anthony (sub. T. James 68 mins.).

SEASON ticket holders' stand seats are on sale for the return leg with A.C. Monza on October 8. Those which have not been claimed are now available to the general public from treasurer Roger Lee.